

**Loudoun County Public Schools
Special Education Advisory Committee
Wednesday, September 9, 2020, 7:15 p.m.**

Chair - Sharon Tropsf

Immediate Past Chair – Dr. Carol Williams-Nickelson

Vice Chair - Planning Shehnaz Khan

Vice Chair - Membership Heidi Bunkua

Vice Chair - Communications Craig Metz

Secretary - Kathryn Rosenbrook

Attendees: A quorum of SEAC voting members was confirmed with Vice Chair of Membership with 14 out of 16 members present.

Business Meeting Agenda September 9, 2020

I. Welcome and Call to Order, Sharon Tropsf, SEAC Chair - 7:15 p.m.

Explained the role of SEAC, regulations, and SEAC Leadership.

II. Public Comment.

- Teresa Wesley: Concerned with the language in the new Prior Notice and Parent Consent statement on consent page of IEP, the new language impacts parental rights and requests the previous Parent Consent statement be used (pre-COVID).
- Mark Altebello: New to the area and have distance learning. Concern parent statement on consent page of IEP. Family has been dismissed when asking questions.
- Beth Fowler: Concerns with the new Prior Notice and Parent Consent statement, requests LCPS remove the new statement and replace with previous Parent Consent statement. LCPS is ignoring parents/students needs. No in person support unless returning to school in October.
- Jessica Cummings: Early Childhood-neuroplasticity concerns and how these needs are not being met. Distance Learning is not working.
- (Scott Levin) Attached-Read by SEAC Chair: Concerns with the new Prior Notice and Parent Consent statement in the IEP.

III. Reports and Updates.

A. Chair.

- Annual Report - Condensed report with top issues from the SEAC survey.
- PTA/PTO Representatives - Letters have been sent to all school Principals. Currently, the Vice Chair of Membership has received 12 reps from the schools. Member training for reps will be done via video including Virginia FOIA. This will be used for new SEAC members as well.
- SEAC Survey - 2953 total responses received and of those over 1800 were fully completed responses. Top issue reported about SEAC's outreach to the special education community was poor communication. SEAC has no way, other than social media, to directly reach families without direct assistance from LCPS. Overall special education satisfaction, pre-COVID was up from the previous year.

- Nominating Committee – Dr. Carol Williams-Nickelson will be reaching out to the membership for nominations, anyone who is interested in taking on a position can also contact Dr. Williams-Nickelson directly. All help is valuable and needed. Nominations will be presented at the October SEAC meeting and elections will be held in November.
- SEAC Bylaws - Thorough review of the current bylaws will begin. The Executive Committee is hoping to begin the committee review process in December. Goal is to have them approved and published in early 2021.
- Current Issues - Hybrid and distance learning seem to be restricting IEP Teams from offering a continuum of services. Requested more information on meeting the individual needs of students with IEPs.
- Update on Policy 5310, Special Education – Policy 5310 currently does not allow for IEP amendments outside of the IEP meeting. The Department of Pupil Services requested the Policy be amended to allow IEP amendments without a meeting. SEAC reviewed the Policy and made recommendations in a special SEAC meeting held in June 2020. These recommendations were adopted by the SSS Committee with a few changes. The draft policy was sent to the School Board. The Department of Pupil Services made changes to Draft Policy 5310 and requested the School Board consider the changed drafted by school board counsel. The School Board sent Policy 5310 back to the SSS Committee to review the changes that were proposed; the SEAC Policy Subcommittee will be holding meetings to review the new language and bring recommendations once again before SEAC membership.

B. Executive Committee.

- Next meeting September 23, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

C. Subcommittees Formation.

- SEAC has three functioning committees. Areas of need will be prioritized with areas to focus on based on the survey. Work that began in March is incomplete but will use what was completed.

D. Parent Resource Services.

- Supports families in being engaged partners with the school through direct support to parents on navigating the special education processes, workshops and web-based community resources.

E. School Board Liaison.

Beth Barts -

- Necessity of member on the Equity Committee. Community Outreach for information.
- As the Chair of the Communications Committee, will be working with Advisory Committees to assist in improving community communication.
- Consent page concerns were brought by parents to the School Board meetings.
- Parents also have concerns IDEA is not being met because of hybrid. Advising families to reach out to school administration for answers and to work together. Getting clarification on bringing students back and how many days that would be.

F. Office of Special Education.

Dr. Patricia Nelson, Director of Special Education

- Made a statement regarding the Prior Notice and Parent (Guardian) Consent language in IEPs. Needed to offer a better contingency plan than what was used in the spring. LCPS wants to fluid and act quickly. Meetings should be focused on services and accommodations by consenting it was to be based on health and safety conditions. Never was intended to take away parental rights.

G. Department of Pupil Services.

Dr. Asia Jones, Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services

- Risk levels increase with approaching of flu season. Planning and work happening to bring stage 1 students back in October 13. Lessons learned from ESY. Need for fitting and training using PPE.
- Policy 5310 is under review.

IV. Business.

- Policy Subcommittee
- Proposed Special Education Task Force to address issues that are facing our special education community. The needs are unique and varied just as our children. Lack of continuum of services. The amount of special education services being provided have been significantly decreased. The lines are getting blurred by ADA and IDEA. Outline solutions to provide to the School Board, presented in a more targeted way. Ad-hoc committee.
- Meeting dates: Some Saturdays and a weeknight to get as many members involved as possible.
- Motion to Propose a Special Learning Task Force – Approved.

V. Adjourn 8:32 p.m.